

Proposal No. 9 N. 84th and Cornhusker

Location	Proposal
East of N. 84 th north of Cornhusker Highway	Amend the 2030 Lincoln/ Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan to 1) Change 6 to 8 acres from Agricultural to Industrial.
Recommendation: Denial of change to Land Use Plan. (Staff will recommend approval of a change of zone for about 4 acres due to limited impact of current use and applicant's initiation of action per 2025 Plan.)	

Description

The applicant is requesting six acres of land east of N. 84th and north of Cornhusker Highway be designated as Industrial in the 2030 Land Use Plan. This property and a surrounding 10 +/- acres are outside of the FEMA 100 year floodplain and floodway. The applicant began the process of initiating a change of zone under the 2025 Plan, but delayed to propose application under the 2030 Plan.

Comprehensive Plan Implications

The 2025 Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Industrial. In developing the land use map for Planning Commission, City Council and County Board review in November 2005, several updates to the land use map were made. This included changing the designation from Industrial to Agricultural or Agricultural Stream Corridor at 1) N. 56th to N. 70th, south of Salt Creek and 2) east of 84th Street, north of Cornhusker Highway. Additionally, Industrial was changed to Commercial on S. 40th Street, south of Yankee Hill Road and at S. 38th and the South Beltway.

While the applicant is proposing only a few acres of industrial use, this application must be considered in terms of the larger surrounding 50 to 100 acres out of the floodway, but in the floodplain which may also request industrial zoning, using the smaller parcel as part of the precedent for approving rezoning of the adjacent land.

The small area east of 84th and north of Cornhusker was changed to Agricultural for the following reasons:

1. The 2030 Plan on page 120 encourages **limiting rail/ vehicular/ pedestrian conflicts**, not creating land uses which will increase the number of vehicles crossing the tracks. The land was north of the Burlington Northern railroad. These **tracks carry over 35 to 40 trains a day** and often block N. 84th Street north of Cornhusker. This is a significant limitation on providing consistent and safe access to industrial development on the north side of the tracks. Public Works and Utilities also notes that they are concerned about the impact of increased traffic and "conflict with fast moving trains" at this location. (See October 23rd memo at the end of the memo.)

Unlike other areas of Lincoln that are blocked by this same line, there is not another road close to provide alternative access to the land. There are no roads between 70th and 84th, nor between 84th and 98th. To the west access is Stevens Creek and to the east is the City of Lincoln Wetland Bank. Development on the south side of Cornhusker at this location is not blocked by trains. A small refuse service may not generate much traffic, but if a larger, adjacent area were developed with industrial uses, the amount of traffic and conflicts on the tracks would increase.

2. The surrounding land north of Cornhusker Highway between 84th and 98th Street is in agricultural use or part of the City's wetland bank. The majority of the surrounding land is in the floodplain or floodway. This smaller area could easily be used as part of the surrounding agricultural use.
3. The 2030 Plan on page 111 includes a "North 70th to North 84th and Havelock Ave. to Bluff Road Study." The intent of the study is to consider how a future road could be extended from the 80th to 84th and Cornhusker area to 70th Street, over the railroad tracks to serve land west of Stevens Creek. Since only agricultural uses were shown east of Stevens Creek, **significant costs of extending bridges and roads to this area would be avoided.** Adding industrial land uses east of Stevens Creek, east of 84th Street, could add significantly to the future transportation costs.
4. The 2030 Plan on page 7 encourages commercial and **industrial development to take place within Lincoln or incorporated towns and cities.** This land was outside the Future Service Limit. Public Works and Utilities notes that sanitary sewer could not be provided today. In the future a sewer line might be extended to the south of Cornhusker Highway. To serve this land a sanitary sewer line would have to cross under Cornhusker Highway, the railroad tracks and two major water transmission lines. An alternative would be to build a siphon across Stevens Creek to the west, which would also be costly. It is cost prohibitive to serve a small area with sanitary sewer. The City does not have water distribution lines on the north side of Cornhusker Highway. Once service was extended to the area south of Cornhusker, it would require boring under Cornhusker and the railroad racks. These water mains are not in the CIP. North 84th Street is currently a gravel road.

Conclusion

After the public hearing, staff discussed with Don Bowman, attorney for the applicant, this proposal further and believe there is agreement to rezone about 4 acres of land at this location to permit the refuse service, but to not designate this land or a larger area as industrial.

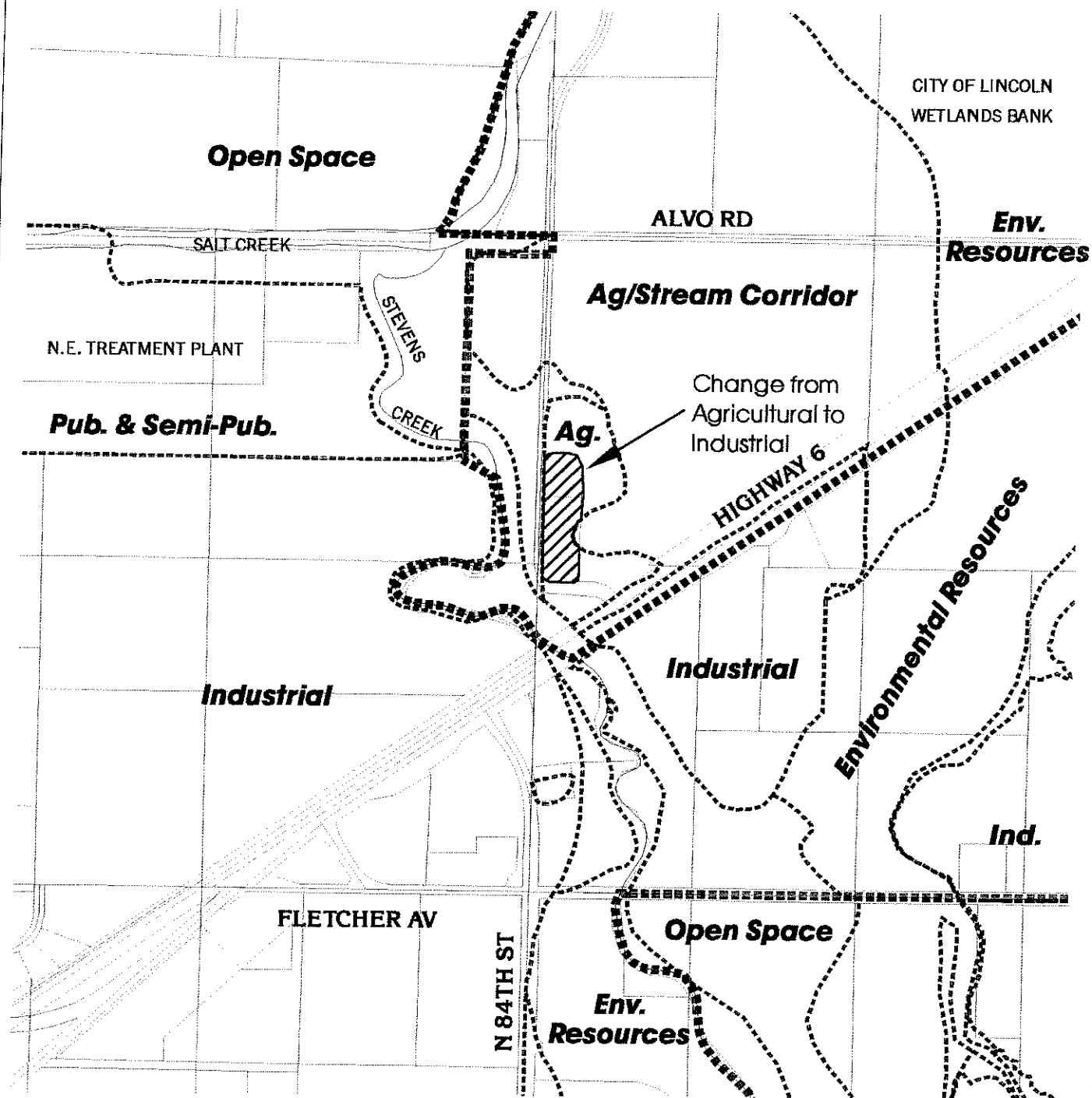
The applicant's intent was to have a few acres of zoning that would allow his refuse service to remain at the current location. The 2025 Plan designated the land as industrial, and the applicant began the process of a change of zone and subdivision in conformance with the Plan. At staff's recommendation, the applicant also submitted a proposal for changing the 2030 Plan to show the area as industrial. However, once this larger area was considered, it became clear that there are many issues and significant concerns with a larger industrial development.

For various reasons listed in this review, this area is not appropriate for substantial industrial development. The adjacent road is gravel, there are no services, the majority of the land is floodplain and access is blocked by 35 to 40 trains or more. However, the applicant's use for a few acres, which does not bring any customers to the site with limited traffic is appropriate given that

he had begun the process under the 2025 Plan. It would be inappropriate to designate industrial uses at this location to encourage a larger area of development. But a change of zone for about 4 acres at this location, given the circumstances, is acceptable.

The area east of Stevens Creek and 84th Street between Cornhusker Highway and Interstate 80 would appear to be a “natural” for commercial and industrial development. It is visible from two major highways and adjacent to a growing city and in the I-80 corridor between Omaha and Lincoln. However, this ignores the natural conditions that over 95% of the land is in the floodplain and floodway. A large portion of the land is also in conservation use and is owned by the City of Lincoln or Lower Platte South NRD. It also ignores the man-made barrier caused by the railroad tracks on the north side of Cornhusker carrying over 35 trains a day and the fact that Interstate 80 does not have an interchange in this corridor.

The City should expand industrial and commercial uses in the I-80 corridor, but in locations outside of the floodplain with good access to paved streets and without railroad conflicts. Sites at N. 56th and I-80 and along the south side of Cornhusker provide ample opportunities for large industrial users. The City also provides numerous locations where a small industrial use, such as a refuse hauler, could locate in close proximity to the city on industrially zoned land.



N 84th and Highway 6

2030 Comprehensive Plan Proposal # 9

- Future Service Limit
- Land Use Boundary
- Res** Land Use Category
- From Agricultural to Industrial

